

Chapter 8

Policy Recommendations

Future Needs, Recommendations and Service Improvement

Every quality organization must engage in continuous self-examination and must seize opportunities for improvement as they are identified. LF&EMS has identified several opportunities for improvement as a result of the CFAI accreditation process and the development of this Standard of Response Coverage document, which include the following:

1. Use this document and Lynchburg 2015 document to **continue a comprehensive environmental analysis** of the projected demands that will be placed on the organization by continued growth, greater density, shifting demographics, and other risks in the future.
2. Work with the City's policy makers to **ensure that Lynchburg maintains a fire fighting/emergency medical force adequately matched to the identified risks, hazards, and demands** of the community.
3. **Establish training programs for all personnel**, with an emphasis on company officers, to review, evaluate and discuss information tracking, use of communications/electronic equipment, computer program interface, and educate them about the link between data, response coverage and deployment decisions.
4. **Enhance the uses of the fire and EMS data reporting systems** to collect more detailed information on unit operational performance. For example, LF&EMS knows how many incidents a unit was dispatched on and arrived on the scene, but not how often the units performed a specific task – such as how often an aerial device actually deployed a master stream.
5. **Enhance and use the “Premise” module on the Visual Fire Info reporting system** to allow for the collection and analysis of more detailed information about buildings in the city. This analysis will serve as a basis for considering whether more closely defined *risk zones* or *demand zones* are necessary for operational planning, or if current *response zones* are effective. Additionally, provide occupancy information, such as suppression systems, and other key risk elements as identified in the RHAVE program.

6. **Maintain the regular revision of the Facilities Plan** to help budget, prioritize capital needs, and forecast. There could also be an effort by the city to review each department's facility plan to determine if there are possible cross-functional purposes that new buildings could be utilized for – such as police sub-stations, recreational facilities, or outposts for other city services that are otherwise located in a single-location, like city hall.
7. **Incorporate recommendations highlighted in this document into the department's strategic plan** as goals, strategies or performance measures, where both financially and operationally feasible.
8. **Expand data analysis capabilities and project deployment needs** through computer applications and models.
9. **Address the issue of exception reporting** and facilitate developing a mechanism in the reporting software so companies can select from a pre-defined drop down list. This will enable the department to more accurately assess response time performance when companies face circumstances that cause a delay or cause a first-due unit to not be the first-due unit to arrive or be dispatched.
10. Establish a process to record *productivity reports* in order to **perform analysis and produce comprehensive reports on resource "true" availability and utilization** at the company level. With this, a measure of true "*out of service*" times will be readily available.
11. Research information on the various methods of delivering training programs to the companies to **reduce the amount of time that units are out of the first-due response zones for training.**
12. Perform improvements in **determining hazardous materials dispatch call types.**
13. **Implement a reporting mechanism/procedure for technical rescue stand-bys** conducted through the PIER program.
14. **Consider alternative training delivery options**, including the feasibility of a centralized emergency services training center, to limit the *out of service* time or to limit the deviation from the established total reflex time response goals while conducting on-duty training.
15. **Conduct a careful review of response times, resources reliability, call volume, station resource levels and deployment levels** in determining alternatives for improving response times in targeted areas of LF&EMS' jurisdiction.

16. **Initiate measures to improve the interaction between LF&EMS and LynCom**, including additional fire and emergency medical dispatching training and monitoring of performance measures, especially call processing time. **Efforts to reduce the call processing time within the adopted standard need to be initiated.**
17. **Work with surrounding jurisdictions to study the feasibility of automatic aid agreements or contract service areas** to prevent the duplication of services in *overlapping* of station service areas.

When this document recommends changes to a LF&EMS standard, and as a part of the annual evaluation of LF&EMS' Standard of Response Coverage, specific information needs to be reconsidered for each of the recommended performance standards. Such information includes:

- National, state or local standards used to establish goals;
- Applicability of the desired performance standard to LF&EMS, considering its resources and the risk analysis;
- Estimated costs as a result of implementing new goals (for example, if additional staffing is required, the estimated costs of full time employees);
- The desired timeline for improvements or obtaining the performance standard; and
- The method to measure the stated goal and/or performance standard.

LF&EMS recognizes that NFPA 1710 has established a deployment standard with specific response times and staffing for all types of calls. We will continue to measure our performance against these response time goals as well as our own adopted response time goals. However, the level of staffing of fire and other emergency apparatus remains a local decision in order to allow jurisdictions appropriate flexibility to deal with their environment, as long as legal mandates and safety concerns are met. It is the responsibility of the authority having jurisdiction to assess the risk in the service community and to provide the needed resources to control that risk safely and effectively.

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